ORGANIZING A "SOCIETY [OF] WOMEN MUSICIANS" IN LONDO[N]

Every Branch of Musical W[ork] represented in a Club of Which Madame Liza [Leh]mann is President.

THE women's clubs of London are quite distinctive, in some ways superior, to the American ones of similar character. The newest addition to them is the Society of Women Musicians, which was organized late in July, and whose first public meeting took place Oct. 17. There were thirty charter members, representing every branch of musical work. Quarters were secured with the Women's Institute, on Victoria Street, within a stone's throw of Westminster Abbey, but the membership has grown so rapidly that the subject of permanent quarters is already seriously considered.

The President of the club is Mme. Liza Lehmann, and with her are associated other well-known women musicians prominent in their own country.

"Why did we organize?" one of these said in a talk with the writer. "Simply because we realized that if we were to accomplish anything we must have the cooperation and support of our own sex. There is little chance for the woman composer to have her work published, and even less opportunity to have it played. England is not like America, and here the woman who does things is a little out of the ordinary. So we are going to make an effort to test the truth of the old maxim that 'In union there is strength.'"

The club has several other motives, as set forth in the by laws. Among them are the following: "To supply a centre where women musicians can meet to discuss and criticise musical matters; to afford members the benefit of co-operation and advice on the business side of the work; to bring composers and executants into touch with each other and give opportunities to the composer to try over her compositions, and lastly to raise the standard of music by creating a public taste for classical numbers on concert programmes."

The formation of this society is due to two young musicians, Miss Marion Scott, composer and leader of a popular string quartet, and Miss Gertrude Eaton, a well-known instructor in singing and Secretary of the Royal College of Music Magazine, published in London.

Miss Scott is half American, her mother belonging to the Prince family of Salem, Mass., and a direct descendant of Patience Brewster of Mayflower fame.

The idea of clubrooms where congenial spirits could talk over their projects occurred to them both, and they soon interested others of their profession in the idea. As the plan developed, more phases of the new work appeared, and it was decided to have women of all branches of music eligible for membership. The composers could help the executants by producing fine new material, and the musicians could reciprocate by carrying the message of harmony into broader fields.

And so the club was launched in July with between fifty and sixty guests present. Not all were musicians, for many of these had already left town, but the charter membership was formed, and since that time many more names have been passed upon. Men as well as women will be admitted to the club after the October meeting, but "the stronger sex" will be associate members with increased dues.

The work as outlined will include lectures by men and women of standing in the musical profession on common questions, which will be followed by debates and free discussions. Several afternoons will be devoted to the presentation of new compositions by members, and it is probable that the society will introduce many innovations into staid English circles.

Mme. Liza Lehmann expects to spend the greater part of the season in London, and will devote her efforts toward building up the new organization, which has started so well.

Another woman prominent in the club who is well known in America is Dr. Ethel Mary Smyth, one of the few opera composers among her sex. "Der Wald," sung at the Metropolitan Opera House a few years ago, is one of her compositions. She also wrote a comic opera, "Fantasio" and the "Wreckers," which are familiar in the foreign opera houses. The latter was produced in London two years ago, is to be heard in Vienna this season, and perhaps in this country. The two overtures to Acts I. and II. of this composition have been frequently performed during the last year in concerts.

Dr. Smyth was formerly Professor of Composition at the Hochschule in Berlin and now occupies a similar position at the Royal College of Music in London.

The Honorary Secretary is a composer-pianist, Miss Katherine Eggar, who created quite a sensation at a recent concert by appearing in a programme of her own works. Several American women have done that, among them Harriet Ware, but the numbers have included songs, and Miss Eggar's compositions were entirely of the concert variety. Several of her works are familiar to music lovers of this country—the "Phantasy Trio" in E minor for piano and strings is a beautiful number, and her "Suite in C Minor" is often played as a 'cello number. In the "Legends of the Norse Gods" the piano expresses the personality of each of seven great figures in Norse mythology, and the translation into m[usic] is most effective. Miss Eggar has writt[en] many songs, too, but prefers the chamber music or solo compositions for piano.

Another composer member who includes some of her own numbers on her concert programme is a young violinist, Miss Ethel Barns, who accompanied Adelina Patti on several of her tours and has been heard many times in recitals throughout London and the provinces. Her prelude for the piano is well known, and Mischa Elman includes the "Swing Song" on his programme.

A song writer who has set to music many well-known poems is Miss Isabel Hearne.

Miss Cecile Hartog, another member, is the composer of the popular setting of Browning's "The Year's at the Spring" and other song settings, as well as compositions for the piano and string instruments.

The officers of this newest London club are: President—Mme. Liza Lehmann; Vice President—Miss Marion Scott; Honorable Secretary—Miss Katherine Eggar; Honorable Treasurer—Miss Gertrude Eaton.

The Musical Council is composed of the following members: Miss Ethel Barns, Miss C. S. Burns, Miss A. B. Darnell, Mrs. F. Dawes, Miss Emily Daymond, Miss Adela Hamaton, Lucie Johnstone, Agnes Larcom, Florence Macnaughton, and Mrs. Stannard.

Other members of the society are Misses Harriet Solly, Eleanor Davies, Beatrice Langley, Stella Fife, Lilly Henkle, Alma Haas, S. Bostock, Phoebe Olway, Halliday Douglas, Laura Bush, Henrietta Kruger, Caroline Perceval, Mme. Degsohemes, Julia Cook-Watson, Frances Davidson, Evangeline Florence, Amy MacDowell, Pauline Barrett, Ethel Carre-Smith, Mabel Saumez-Smith, Anne Mukle, and May Mukle.

Nuts to Crack

It isn't every man whose dinner fits his appetite.

What some men lack in backbone they make up in cheek.

The under dog generally gets more sympathy than he deserves.

The fellow who doesn't amount to much loses no time in letting us know it.

Self-possession is nine points of the lawyer.

Friendship and flattery are more alliterative than allied.

Many a fellow is afraid to propose to a girl for fear she might say yes.

When you can see through a man it doesn't necessarily mean that he has a clear conscience.

Somehow or other the people who are satisfied to take things as they find them never seem to find anything.

The New York Times. Sunday. October 22nd 1911.